

program supported by the Secretary of State, is now going to be filibustered because people do not want to fund special education—a very interesting approach to government.

Mr. President, I look forward to this debate, I look forward to a lot of it, because I do think that the American people need to learn just how irresponsible this administration has been on the funding of special education.

Mr. KENNEDY addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, perhaps the good Senator didn't hear me. We are prepared to accept the amendment. So if there is no other speaker on it, we are prepared to vote on the amendment.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. KENNEDY. Yes.

Mr. GREGG. Will the Senator accept this amendment on any other initiatives, which are appropriate, which are going to have funding for the purpose of education?

Mr. KENNEDY. We have this bill up now. The Senator has offered the amendment. In behalf of this side, we are prepared to accept it right now.

Mr. President, we are prepared to vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the amendment?

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am pleased to be an original cosponsor of the amendment offered by Senator JEFFORDS. The amendment would require the federal government to make good on its commitment to fund special education before it made any additional promises it might not keep.

When Congress passed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 1975, the federal government made a commitment to the states and to the local school districts to help states meet the cost of special education. The federal government promised to pay each state 40 percent of the national average per capita cost of providing elementary and secondary education for each student receiving special education. For the school year 1996-1997, the national average expenditure was \$5,913 per student. The federal payment to the states, however, was only \$636 per student or slightly more than ten percent of the total cost and about one fourth of the \$2,365 promised.

We must meet our commitment to special education and end this unfunded mandate. Maine is promised \$80 million by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Yet, in 1998, it received less than \$20 million toward the \$200 million federal law requires the state to spend on special education. In short, special education is an unfunded federal mandate of \$60 million

that must be met by the citizens of Maine through already burdensome state income and local property taxes. This accounts for millions of dollars annually that can not be used for school construction, for teacher salaries, for new computers, or for any other state effort to improve the performance of our elementary and secondary school students.

We need to increase federal spending on education, but we do not need new federal categorical programs with more federal regulations and dollars wasted on administrative costs. Rather, we need to meet our commitment to bear our fair share of special education costs. As the Governor of Maine told President Clinton last week, "If you want to do something for schools in Maine, then fund special education and we can hire our own teachers and build our own schools." This is true for every state. The best thing this Congress can do for education is to fully fund our share of special education and at the same time return control of the schools to the states and local communities by passing the Education Flexibility Act.

These two actions will empower our states and communities to meet the challenge of improving schools. Instead of presuming that we in Washington know what is best for every school across the country, let us acknowledge that each of our individual states and towns knows what is needed on a state-by-state and community-by-community basis. I urge my colleagues to give our states and local communities the financial support they have been promised and the freedom to educate our students as they see fit. We can do this by adopting this amendment to fully fund the federal share of special education and then passing the Local Control of Education Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment offered by the Senator from Vermont.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I believe at this time we have no further business that is immediately available. I suggest we ask unanimous consent to set the vote for 2:15 and that the Senate be in morning business until such time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KENNEDY addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask consent to proceed in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator may proceed.

#### THE EDUCATION BUDGET

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I listened to our friend and colleague from New Hampshire speak about the education budget and about the expenditures in the areas of education. I just want to review here, in this time, for a few moments, exactly what has been the record of our Republican friends in the House and Senate, and the administration, over the period since 1994 when the Republicans took over the leadership in the Congress.

After 1994, on March 16, 1995, one of the first acts of the new Republican House of Representatives was to ask for a \$1.7 billion rescission on all education programs below what was enacted in the appropriations the year before. That is an extensive rescission, no matter how you cut it. This is in all the education programs of 1994. They asked to cut back \$1.7 billion. The final rescission bill that passed on July 27, 1995, was \$600 million below 1995. So, as we are looking over, now, and listening to who is interested in education, I hope our colleagues will at least give some attention, when they are reviewing the record, as to who has been interested and who has been committed, judging by the allocation of resources. Resources themselves do not solve the problems of education, but they are a pretty good indication of a nation's priorities.

What we had as the first order of business in 1995 in the House rescission bill was to move ahead with a major cut of \$1.7 billion for the appropriations the year before. Now, in the first full funding cycle, the 1996 House Appropriations, in August of 1995, cut \$3.9 billion below 1996. Then the continuing resolution ended up at \$3.1 billion below 1996. This was at a time when we had the memorable shutdown of the Government. The President said, That is too much, you will be cutting the heart out of many of these education programs. That was one of the principal reasons he went toe-to-toe with the Congress, because of those dramatic cuts in the area of education. Finally, there was a continuing resolution after the Senate adopted a Specter-Harkin amendment to restore \$2.7 billion. We saw a bottom line \$400 million below fiscal year 1996.